

All Set

Poe is known for his vivid, bizarre settings. His description helps establish a feeling of terror. Now you'll try your hand at painting a picture that will help your reader get into the mood for a story.

In two double spaced pages you must accomplish the following task:
describe a scene,
introduce a main character,
and show that the person has a serious problem to face.

DON'T SOLVE THE PROBLEM. JUST GET A CHARACTER IN TROUBLE!

An example:

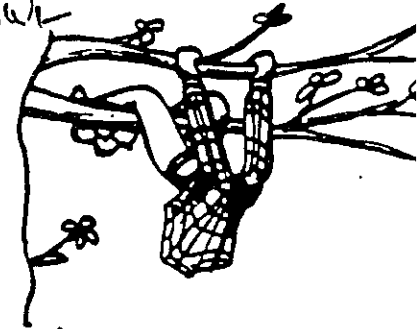
Bump. Margo's face rubbed against the rough lining of the car trunk. From unconsciousness, she became awake--terrifyingly awake. He had approached her just as she was shaking the sand out of her blanket before heading back to the parking lot. He couldn't find any of his friends in the crowd. He needed to get his cooler and some beach equipment back up to the car, but with his arm in a sling.... Well, could she just carry the cooler?

What an idiot I was she thought. As she bent to load the trunk, he swung at her. The first blow knocked her off balance. The second and the third completed the task. She must have lost consciousness quickly.

Now the car was bumping along a bad road. No sounds of traffic. An isolated area. The feeling of isolation increased Margo's panic. She must control her breathing. How much air was in the trunk? She must control her fear. How could she defeat this fiend?

The car stopped. A car door. There was the crunch of gravel.

VUKKAWL



A cliff-hanger may involve physical danger.

Example:

"Come on," yelled Melissa. She shook her head as she turned on the trail to look back at her puffing, awkward companion. "You've got to get into better condition. Now me, I jog every day. My coach says I'll be all-state track star if I keep it up."

Jeff said nothing. His chest ached with the effort he was making. He hated physical activities. He longed to be back in the camper where he could peacefully curl up and read his latest adventure novel. Instead, he was stuck entertaining his obnoxiously energetic cousin, Melissa Stanburg. Much to Jeff's displeasure, their two families had decided to camp together in a remote area of Idaho.

"Wow, look at this, Jeff!" Melissa pointed to the entrance of an abandoned mine. She trotted toward the opening.

"Uh, Melissa, I wouldn't go in there if I were you. Abandoned mines are often dangerous."

"Geesh, you are such a fraidy-cat," Melissa said in disgust.

"You can stay outside if you want, sissy."

"All right, all right." Jeff entered slowly.

They were several feet into the mine, and Jeff had to admit that it was interesting to see the texture and color variation in the rock. Suddenly, Melissa shouted, hoping to hear her voice echo.

Shocked, Jeff whispered, "Don't. Loud voices in a cave can cause..."

He was too late. A heavy shower of rocks tumbled from the ceiling.

!

Cliff-Hangers may also involve perplexing personal decisions.

Example:

Debbie sat listening to Marge chatter on about Brad Watters. She described what he was wearing, what he said during class, what he thought of the test. Obviously, Marge was crazy about him, but so were half the girls at Lanphier High School. Since Brad and Cathy had broken up during the summer, he was considered fair game for any girl.

"And you know what?" asked Marge as she began gathering up the wrappings from her lunch. "I think he's going to ask me to go with him to Tracy's party. He asked me today if we'd gotten invitations." She smiled brightly. "Listen, I've got to run. I've got a test to study for. See ya' after school." Marge walked away happily. Debbie waved good-bye, then turned back to the cup of yogurt she was eating.

"Ugh, that stuff looks terrible. How can you eat it?" Brad Watters said as he sat down across from her.

She laughed. "I used to hate it too, but really it's great once you get used to it. Want a bite?"

"No, thanks! Say, I just stopped by to see if you'd like to go with me to Tracy's party this weekend. Marge told me you got invited."

"Uh, sure," Debbie said, surprised.

"Great. You ready to go? I'll walk you to class." They left the cafeteria together. Brad talked easily about football practice and his next class. Debbie responded, but her mind raced ahead to the after school confrontation. How could she tell Marge what had happened?

1

Story Starting Techniques

DIALOGUE: Use conversation between two or more characters to give the opening essential information.

Example:

I returned from lunch with reluctance. There was a lot of paperwork ahead. As I pushed open the office door, Nick Carpenter came toward me.

"Oh, Perez, glad I caught you. Just left a message on your desk. Come on. We've got a case." The two of us started down toward the parking lot.

"What's up?" I said, almost glad I didn't have to face another day at my desk.

"An old friend of yours got it last night," he said. "Shot through the head."

"Who?" I asked.

"Remember Casey Taylor?"

"Remember?" I laughed. "It's hard to forget that punk. Any major suspects so far?"

"Don't know. I expect the lab boys might have something already. I sent them ahead." Nick reached the car and slid into the driver's seat.

"Casey Taylor's dead," I thought. I wasn't surprised.

DESCRIPTION: Start your story with a description of a scene or major character.

Example:

-----Since he had arrived at the scene of the crime, Detective David Perez had busied himself with gathering information. He had talked with the nervous, stammering fireman who had discovered the body. He had directed the evidence-collecting activities of the specialists who were pouring over the cluttered contents of the basement. On his worn, black memo pad, he had made brief notes for himself. Finally, he steeled himself to look at the murder victim. He squatted down beside the body and let his eyes scan the results of violent death. He noted the bruises on the throat, the abrasions on the face, and the torn flesh around the opening of the bullet entry point. David Perez stood up. He knew that this time he didn't care. Casey Taylor, the dead man, was a worthless punk. He would look for his killer only because that was a policeman's job.

FLASHBACK: A character in the story remembers events which provide important details.

Detective David Perez looked down at the message the receptionist had handed him when he returned from lunch.

Casey Taylor's dead. Gun shot wound. Meet me at 727 Locust.

Perez left immediately. As he drove toward the scene of the crime, he thought back to the first day he met Casey Taylor.

It was nine...no, ten years ago. He had been working the juvenile division then. An old lady called in to the station. On several Wednesdays, she'd observed some young kids meeting under a big tree in a vacant lot across from her house. She thought they might be buying drugs during their school lunch. He agreed to check it out. He climbed up into the branches of the tree. Twenty minutes later, he spied a scruffy, long-haired fourteen year old swaggering toward the rendezvous spot. The boy lit up a cigarette and sat on a stump waiting. The buyers, two grade school kids, arrived soon afterward. Perez watched the transfer of money and marijuana before he jumped down from the tree to make the arrest. Casey, the fourteen year old, had delivered a swift kick to the officer's leg. The memory of it still caused pain.

"No," thought Perez as he turned into the victim's driveway, "I'm certainly not surprised that somebody killed Casey Taylor."

QUESTIONS: A character poses questions to involve the reader and to direct major story elements:

Detective David Perez squatted and lifted the sheet covering the body of Casey Taylor. Gun shot wound to the head. Close range, too. Not a very pretty sight. He stood and okayed the removal of the body.

Watching the attendants carry the corpse away, he found himself searching for answers to so many questions: Where's the murder weapon? What's the motive? How did a street-wise punk like Taylor meet his match?

Perez took out his worn black notebook, then paused. The biggest question in his mind was, "Why should I even bother?"

Skill Review: Quotation Mark Rules

Part A.

Directions: Review the rules for punctuating quotations. Study each example sentence.

1. Use quotation marks to enclose a direct quotation, a person's exact words.
"I'm really hungry," John said.
(Use quotation marks because this is a direct quotation—the exact words John said.)
Yesterday, John told us that he was really hungry.
(No quotation marks are needed for this indirect quotation—exact words are not used.)
2. A direct quotation begins with a capital letter.
"What's the motive for the crime?" asked Watson.
Sherlock responded haughtily, "Revenge."
3. When a quoted sentence is divided into two parts by an interrupting expression such as *he said* or *Mother asked*, the second part begins with a lowercase letter.
"You can go to the show," Mom said, "if you have all of your homework done."
4. A direct quotation is set off from the rest of the sentence by commas, a question mark, or an exclamation point.
"Stop that!" shouted Lois.
"Why?" whined Charlie.
5. Commas and periods are always placed inside the closing quotation marks.
"You need help," remarked the doctor.
The doctor remarked, "You need help."
6. Question marks and exclamation points are placed inside the closing marks if the closing quotation is a question or an exclamation.
Janet whispered, "Is that a light?"
Tony gasped, "No, it's a ghost!"
7. If a quotation appears within a quoted conversation, single quotation marks are used as demonstrated below. When the single quotation appears at the end of the sentence, use only one end punctuation mark.
Marie asked "Did Miss Stuart say, 'Turn in your papers today?'"
(Miss Stuart's remarks are a statement, but Marie asked a question. Use a single quotation; the question mark, and then the double quotations.)
Marie asked, "Did Miss Stuart say, 'Where are your papers?'"
(Miss Stuart asked a question. Use the question mark, a single quotation, and the double quotation. Do not add a second question mark.)
Terry yelled, "I heard my brother scream, 'I'm drowning!'"
(Terry's brother screamed. Use the exclamation mark, a single quotation, and the double quotation. Do not add a second exclamation mark.)
Cathy whispered, "The teacher asked, 'Do you all have your homework?'"
(Do not add a period. The quotation already has one end punctuation mark.)

~~These~~
alternatives to "said"

added
 agreed
 allowed
 announced
 answered
 approved
 argued
 asserted
 assumed
 assured
 asked
 attested
 avowed
 babbled
 bantered
 bargained
 barked
 began
 begged
 bellowed
 beseeched
 boasted
 bragged
 called
 cautioned
 charged
 chided
 cited
 claimed
 commanded
 commented
 complained
 conceded
 concluded
 confessed
 confided
 contended
 continued
 contradicted
 countered
 cried

declared
 decreed
 demanded
 demurred
 denied
 denounced
 described
 dictated
 directed
 disclosed
 divulged
 drawled
 elaborated
 emphasized
 enjoined
 exclaimed
 explained
 exposed
 expressed
 granted
 hinted
 imparted
 implied
 implore
 indicated
 inquired
 insisted
 interjected
 intimidated
 itemized
 lamented
 maintained
 mentioned
 mumbled
 murmured
 mused
 muttered
 narrated
 noted
 observed
 pleaded

predicted
 professed
 protested
 queried
 questioned
 quipped
 quoted
 reaffirmed
 reasoned
 reassured
 recalled
 recited
 recommended
 recounted
 refuted
 reiterated
 related
 remarked
 remembered
 reminisced
 repeated
 replied
 reported
 requested
 responded
 resumed
 revealed
 screamed
 shouted
 snapped
 specified
 stated
 stipulated
 stressed
 suggested
 testified
 threatened
 urged
 uttered
 vowed
 warned

Sensory Words

Directions: Use this list to make your writing more vivid and exact. Keep it in your notebook and add useful words as you learn them.

Sight

appearance
dotted
freckled
spotted
blotched
wrinkled
mottled
striped
bright
clear
shiny
glowing
glossy
shimmering
sparkling
iridescent
glassy
flashy
glazed
sheer
transparent
opaque
muddy
grimy
drab
dull
dark
dismal
rotted
worn
untidy
shabby
messy
cheap
ugly
ramshackle
tired
exhausted
awkward
crooked
loose
curved
straight
orderly
formal
crisp
pretty
heavy
flat
stout
rigid
narrow

overloaded
congested
cluttered
crowded
jammed
packed
bruised
stretched
erect
lean
slender
supple
lithe
lively
muscular
sturdy
robust
hardy
strong
healthy
frail
fragile
pale
pasty
sickly
spry
miniature
timid
shy
fearful
apprehensive
tearful
nervous
frightened
terrified
hysterical
wild
bold
dramatic
irresistible
exuberant
energetic
animated
perky
attractive
arrogant
expansive
regal
stately
elegant
statuesque
huge
immense

massive
gigantic
showy
decorative
distinctive
dazzling
jeweled
lacy
lavish
exotic
gorgeous
radiant
vivid
flushed
fiery
blazing
fresh
tidy
handsome
pleasant
sunny
calm
serene
unruffled

Taste

oily
buttery
salty
bitter
bittersweet
sweet
mellow
sugary
crisp
ripe
bland
tasteless
sour
vinegary
fruity
tangy
raw
alkaline
medicinal
fishy
spicy
peppery
gingery
hot
burnt
overripe
spoiled
rotten

Shapes

flat
round
proportioned
curved
wavy
globular
swollen
crimped
frilled
padded
pendulous
oval
conical
cylindrical
tubular
hollow
rotund
chubby
portly
square
lumpy
tufted
split
jutting
irregular
skinny
triangular
rectangular
hexagonal
octagonal
crooked
pyramidal
tapering
wide
twiggy
stretched
broken
spindly
domed
thin
wiry
shapely
winged
shapeless
ruffled
curved
straight
crinkled
narrow

Speech

stutter
stammer

giggle
guffaw
laugh
sing
yell
scream
screech
snort
bellow
growl
chatter
murmur
whisper
whimper
talk
speak
drawl
hiss

Smell

sweet
scented
fragrant
aromatic
perfumed
flowery
balmy
gamey
earthy
piney
minty
odorous
pungent
spicy
putrid
sharp
spoiled
fishy
briny
acidic
burnt
gaseous
mildewed
damp
rotten
sour
rancid
sickly
stagnant
moldy
musty
fresh
dank
stale

<p>Sounds</p> <p>Soft</p> <p>sigh murmur whisper crackle bleat twitter buzz zing mutter snap hiss chime tinkle peep hush gurgle swish inaudible melodious harmonious musical speechless mute taunt rustle patter resonance hum</p> <p>Loud</p> <p>crash thud bump thump boom thunder bang smash explode roar scream screech yell whistle shine squawk bark bawl bray bluster rage blare rumble grate clap stomp stamp</p>	<p>noise discord jangle rasp clash tumult clamor yowl brawl bedlam pandemonium hubbub blatant deafening raucous earsplitting piercing shout</p> <p>Movements</p> <p>Fast</p> <p>hurry run scamper skip scramble dart spin stride streak trot gallop drive dash bolt bounce swoop plunge swing fly sail careen rush race zoom zip ram chase hurl whisk rip shove swerve smash plummet</p> <p>Slow</p> <p>creep plod slouch</p>	<p>lumber tip toe bend amble saunter loiter stray stalk heave sneak stagger waddle drag sway lift</p> <p>Touch</p> <p>cool cold lukewarm tepid warm hot steamy elastic feathery slippery spongy mushy oily waxy fleshy rubbery tough fuzzy hairy silky satiny velvety smooth soft wooly furry leathery thin fragile gritty sandy rough sharp thick pulpy dry dull damp wet</p> <p>Colors</p> <p>Red</p> <p>pink</p>	<p>salmon rose coral raspberry strawberry tomato currant cherry crimson cardinal vermillion flame ruby garnet wine</p> <p>Blue</p> <p>sky sapphire azure delft porcelain turquoise aqua aquamarine violet peacock teal cobalt royal navy powder</p> <p>Yellow</p> <p>beige straw peach apricot butter buttercup lemon chartreuse citron canary chrome gold topaz ocher saffron sulphur mustard butterscotch orange tangerine persimmon</p> <p>Purple</p> <p>lavender amethyst lilac orchid</p>	<p>mauve plum mulberry fuchsia magenta</p> <p>General</p> <p>colorless rainbow drab stark vibrant blend vivid</p> <p>White</p> <p>snow milky marble cream ivory oyster pearl silver bone</p> <p>Green</p> <p>celery mint apple lime moss pea kelly emerald olive pistachio chartreuse</p> <p>Brown</p> <p>sandy almond amber tawny hazel cinnamon nutmeg chocolate copper rust ginger bronze walnut mahogany</p> <p>Black</p> <p>jet ebony licorice</p> <p>Gray</p> <p>ashen dove steel</p>
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Project Assessment for Cliffhanger

	<u>Very Weak</u>	<u>Weak</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Above Average</u>	<u>Superior</u>
Plot development (x2)	1	2	3	4	5
Depth of description	1	2	3	4	5
Spelling	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar	1	2	3	4	5
Manuscript Quality	1	2	3	4	5
Word Count	1	2	3	4	5

Score _____/35= _____

STORY STRUCTURE MAP

What is the setting?

Who are the main characters?

(Episode #1)

What does the main character want?

What is the problem?

(Episode #2)

What did the main character do to solve the problem?

(Episode #3)

What happened next?

(Episode #4)

And then what happened?

How was the goal met and the problem solved?

How did the main character feel in the end?